



DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

BOBBY JINDAL
GOVERNOR

PEGGY M. HATCH
SECRETARY

For Immediate Release
Dec. 8, 2010

Contact: Tim Beckstrom
Phone: 225-219-3967

EPA approves DEQ's report on Grays Creek Watershed in Livingston Parish

BATON ROUGE – The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 6, recently commended Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality on their work toward developing a Total Maximum Daily Load schedule concerning biochemical oxygen-demanding substances for the Grays Creek Watershed in Livingston Parish.

Total Maximum Daily Load, or TMDL, consist of a set of guidelines established by DEQ which detail the concentrations a particular water body may receive without creating detrimental effects upon human health and the environment. Under the Clean Water Act, permits issued by DEQ relating to a specific water body must outline specific TMDL requirements that are to be firmly in place. Those requirements are designed to ensure that the water body can maintain viability and sustainability while being protective of health and environmental conditions.

Under DEQ's new Phased TMDL approach, any new facility discharging dissolved oxygen loads into Grays Creek must demonstrate that they will reduce their overall load of man-made oxygen demanding constituents into the creek. New facilities may also be constructed if the facility can demonstrate that their discharge will not enter into any waterway that may lead into Grays Creek. Temporary permits will be granted on a limited basis, provided such facilities agree to connect to Regional Collection and Treatment Facilities as part of their discharge plan. Both existing and new dischargers must also meet specific effluent concentration limits. Phase two accommodates the potential development of a Use Attainability Analysis to verify the dissolved oxygen water quality standard in the creek.

"This recognition by EPA is an acknowledgment of the thorough work and dedication of DEQ's TMDL and Water Permitting staff in their effort to turn around many of the impaired water bodies in the state," said Chris Piehler, DEQ Senior Environmental Scientist. "Grays Creek Watershed has seen many challenges in recent years relative to increasing numbers of discharges and various naturally-occurring environmental threats. This project was undertaken to implement measures that dramatically reduce the effluent concentrations into the water body with the goal of reaching sustainable water quality that supports fishing and swimming in the creek."